



# 10 Ways A Cloud-Based Point of Sale Will Save Time and Increase Revenue

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## Intro

A point of sale system is an investment that not all small businesses feel they can afford. In fact, 48% of retailers do not use an inventory management system at all. Small business owners need to make hard decisions about where to spend their money, and it is understandable that some would feel they would not get an adequate return for the investment they would make in a POS. Unfortunately, those who do not utilize the power of an efficient POS system are missing out on the time they could be saving and the revenue they could be making. The return is worth the investment.



# 48%

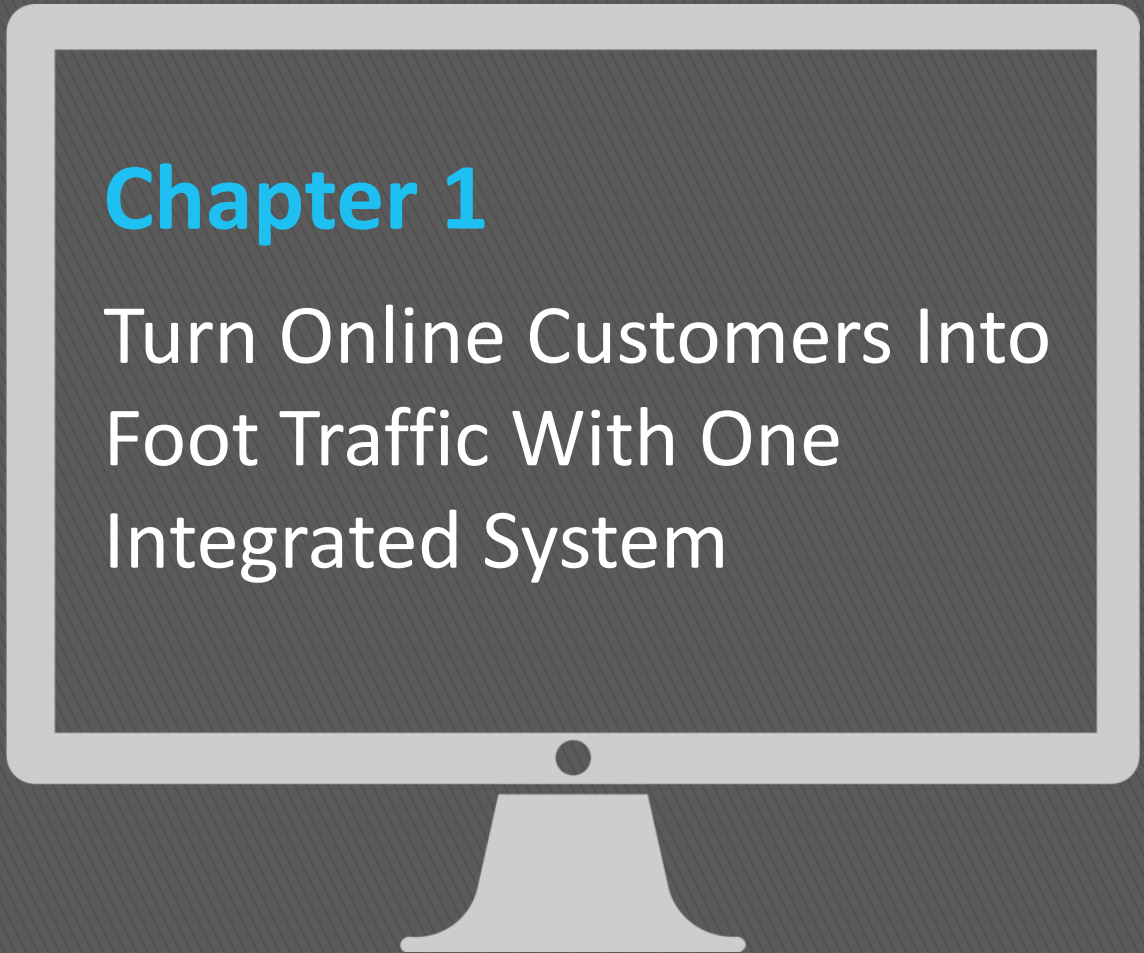
Of retailers don't use an  
inventory management  
system

This white paper will debunk the myth that small businesses don't need a point of sale system. It will teach you why having the right POS is essential to any retail business, large or small, and **how the right POS will not only tighten your inventory management process, but also save you time and money, and even increase revenue.**

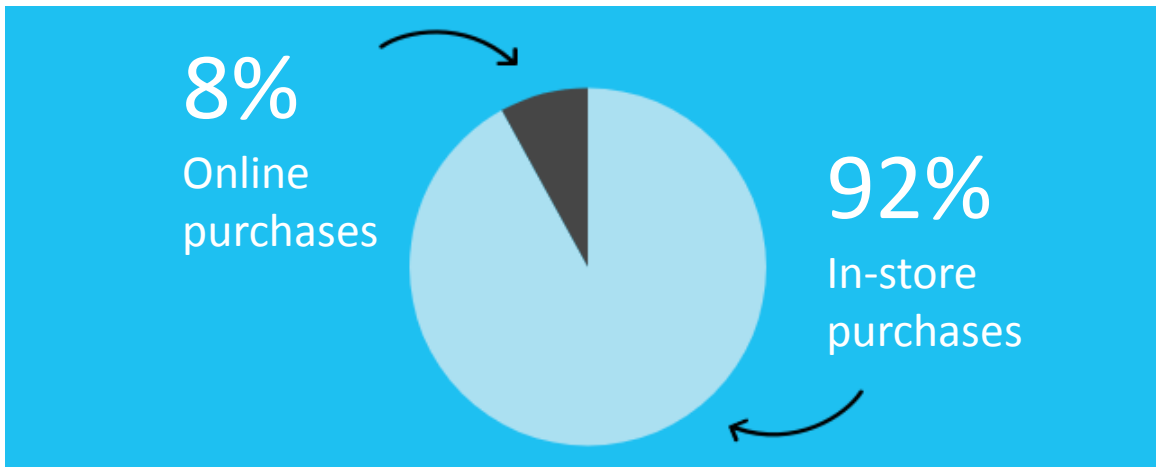
In the white paper, you will find multiple cheat sheets that will give you a starting place for choosing the right POS. They will tell you what functions a POS should have to bring you the greatest return on your investment.

# Chapter 1

Turn Online Customers Into  
Foot Traffic With One  
Integrated System



According to the US Department of Commerce, less than 9% of total retail sales were online in Q1 of 2017. While this number has been steadily rising over the last ten years, it is lower than some of us might think. Does this data mean that today's retailer doesn't need to worry about selling products online? Absolutely not.



While the actual sales from online shopping are only around 9%, the use of the internet as a means of researching products is much higher.

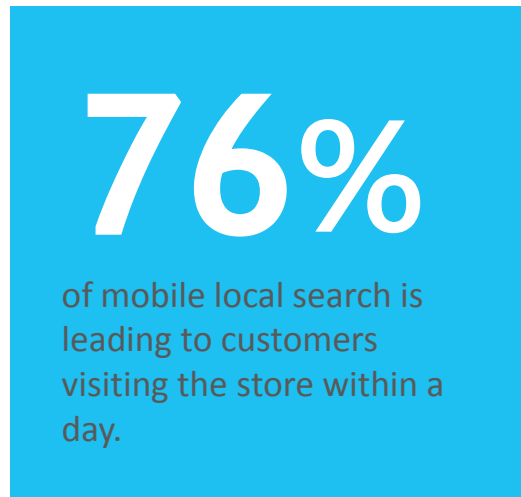
According to GE Capital Retail Bank's Second Annual Major Purchase Shopper Study, **81% of consumers do research online before making a purchasing decision.** While these researchers sometimes complete their shopping experience online, many of them take it to the storefront.



Cisco reports that **65% of shoppers research online, but purchase in store.**

Other studies support this data. Forbes quoted a study done by shopping center operator Westfield in which they found that **73% of UK shoppers said that touch and feel, and trial of the products, was a main benefit of physical stores.**

Google connects the dots between online researching and in store product trial with the following data: nearly **60% of Google searches are happening on mobile devices and 76% of mobile local search is leading to customers visiting the store within a day.**



All of these studies point to the same thing: shoppers want to research online and then come in to your store to see and purchase the product. Because a high percentage of today's offline shopping actually starts online, retailers need to have their inventory available online so their website will come up in search results when consumers are searching for specific products in their local area. Then consumers can see the available products, and visit the store to learn more and complete the purchase.

If retailers do not put their inventory online, their shop will not be found when consumers search for the very product they have. That consumer will most likely shop with a competitor who does have their inventory online. The retailer without inventory online will lose the sale and their overall foot traffic and sales will dwindle.

**Online traffic is an essential part of offline foot traffic.**



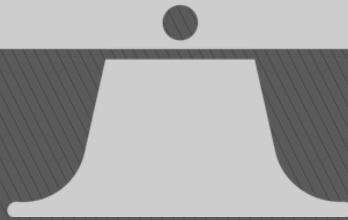
When considering the ROI of your website or online store, be aware that the revenue increases caused by an online presence may not appear in the online store. While an online store will bring in online sales, it also becomes a pathway to the brick and mortar store. The dollars may show up in the physical store, even if the customer started their shopping process in the online one.

To increase your foot traffic and overall revenue, you need a POS that keeps inventory up to date online and in the store. This way customers can shop on your website, see that an item is in stock, then drive to the store to check it out and purchase it.

**Customers cannot buy products that they don't see. You need to have your inventory online and you need a POS system that makes the process quick and painless so that it doesn't fall to the back burner.**

## Chapter 2

An Effective POS Creates  
Time By Combining  
Multiple Systems Into A  
Single Cloud-Based System





There's no way around it. Retailers need to be easily found online. While they may understand that they essentially need two stores, having the time and energy to actually put the principle into practice can be challenging.

With barely enough time to run the physical shop, how is a store owner supposed to have time to run an online one? Essentially running two stores?

The answer is simple. Today's retailer shouldn't have to do everything twice. There shouldn't be a list of products that have been entered into the store's system, that then also have to separately be entered into the online store. **Both inventory updates need to happen at the same time.**

With the right POS, retailers can manage both an online store, and a physical store in less time than it takes the average store owner to run just one or the other.

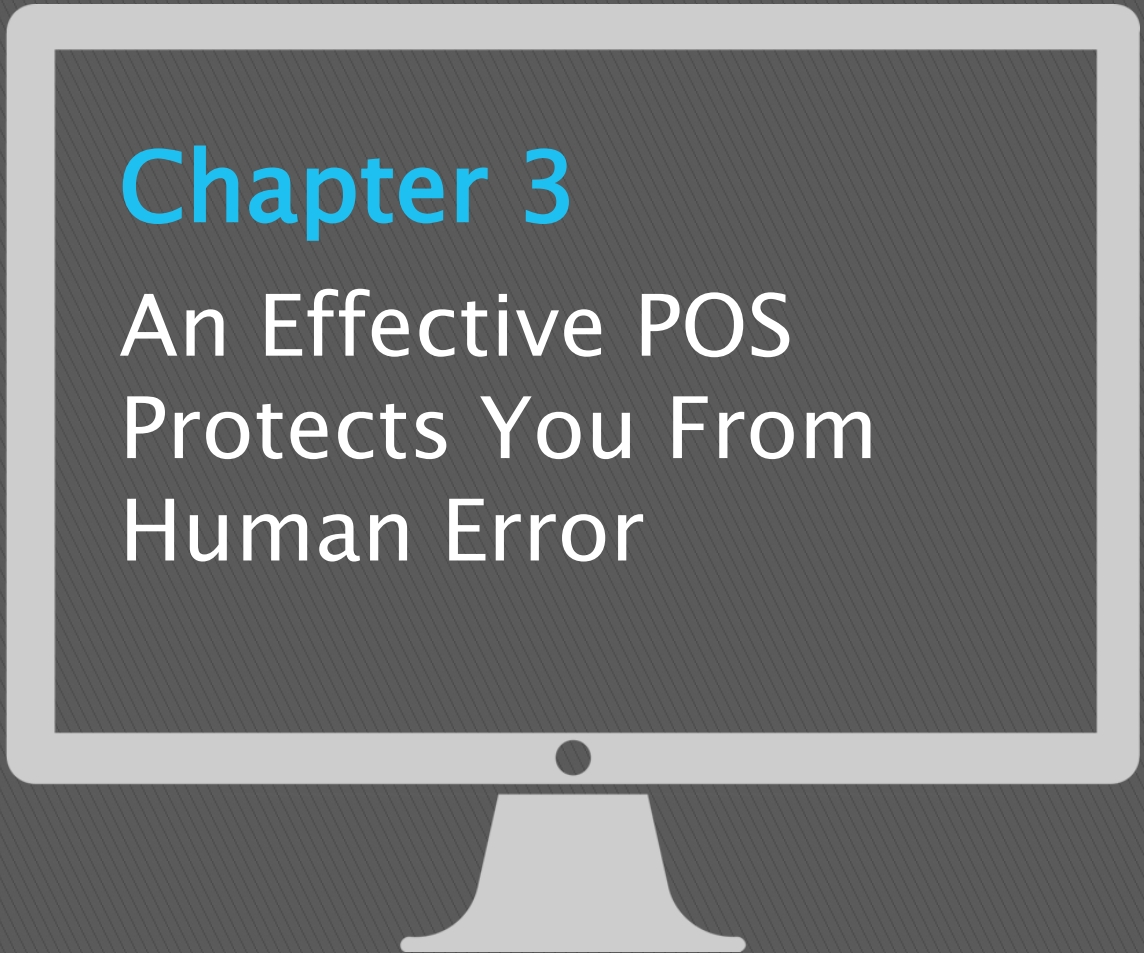
This is accomplished with a POS that pulls data from one single cloud-based system. This type of system pulls information for online products and in-store products from one place. This means that when anything is updated in that single database, whether it be a price change, an increase in inventory, or removal of a product, it is updated everywhere. It is updated in the store and on the website. This ensures that inventory will always be accurate.

Imagine how much time you will save by using a cloud-based POS that pulls data from one database. No more entering everything twice.

Customers might love your products, but only if they know about them. Because most consumers begin their shopping journey online, you need to be sure to have all of your products available online so customers can find them and either purchase them, or come to the store to learn more. The right point of sale will make this goal possible in a fraction of the time.

# Chapter 3

An Effective POS  
Protects You From  
Human Error



Even if you're pretty good at manually calculating orders or recording inventory changes, you're still subject to the fact that you're human and humans aren't perfect. And while it's true that a small error here and there won't break the bank, something as small as a 1% margin of error could actually cost you thousands of dollars over the course of a year.

Consider this scenario from Firmology: Say that you take in an average revenue of \$1,569.60 six days a week, 52 weeks a year. **With only a 1% margin of error—whether calculating something wrong or not accounting for something at all—you'll end up losing \$4,897.15 a year.** That's a hard pill to swallow when every dollar makes a huge difference, especially in today's competitive retail environment.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \$1,569 & \times & 1\% = & \$4,897 \\ \text{daily} & & \text{margin of} & \\ \text{revenue} & & \text{error} & \\ & & & \text{LOST PER YEAR} \end{array}$$

How do you ensure that you don't lose even 1% of your revenue due to human error? Use a cloud-based POS that manages ALL of your inventory with a single system. The fewer systems you need to jump between, the fewer errors you will have. With a streamlined system that automates many of your steps, you'll save time and risk.

To best protect yourself from human error, you need a system that not only effectively manages your online and offline inventory, but also manages your classes and rentals, and tracks your repairs (more in upcoming chapters).

Don't be a part of the 48% without an inventory management system. Invest in a POS that can make sure manual or human errors don't eat into your bottom line by improving the accuracy of your daily business transactions and inventory tracking.

## Chapter 4

# Automate Inventory Optimization Through Powerful Reports And Alerts

### Cheat Sheet

11 Report  
Capabilities To  
Look For

Business owners spend hours and hours trying to decide which products to reorder and which ones to hold off on. This is an important decision that retailers should be concerned with since 70% of shopping decisions are made in front of the shelf. (Nielsen)



On a similar thread, Radial reports that 81% of customers will leave your website to shop with a competitor if an item is backordered or out of stock. The National Retail Federation reports that **U.S. retailers lost 45 billion due to low inventory**. Out-of-Stock signs are no joke. At the same time, having too much stock is also risky. The same report also showed **U.S. Retailers losing 224 billion due to excessive inventory**.

Time is money and also needs to be considered. The greater the inventory, the more time retailers and their employees need to spend managing that inventory.

With these considerations, how is a retailer to know which items to keep in stock?

**Rather than stabbing in the dark at which product to feature and which ones to send to the clearance section, let the numbers tell you.** Use a POS that tracks your sales and reports to you on which items are popular and which ones you can hold off on restocking. Your POS should alert you when items have low inventory so you can order those items to avoid having them go out of stock. This will prevent you from having popular items go out of stock, thus preventing you from losing those sales. Additionally, your POS should keep you aware of items with excessive inventory so you can manage those items accordingly.

Having a POS that automatically runs the numbers for you, telling you sales by item, which inventory is low or in excess, and what your inventory value is will not only save you hours upon hours of time spent with a calculator, it will also help you make wise inventory management decisions.

# CHEAT SHEET

## 11 Report Capabilities to Look For:

1. Inventory Value
2. Ordered Inventory
3. Low Inventory
4. End of day report
5. Sales Summary
6. Sales by item
7. Transaction detail
8. Margins
9. Customer Balances
10. Gift Cards Purchased
11. Gift Cards Outstanding

## Chapter 5

Automate Service & Repair  
Tracking & Customer  
Notifications to Increase  
Revenue

**Cheat Sheet**  
How To Create  
Happy Customers

**Cheat Sheet**  
12 Functions  
A Repair  
Tracker  
Should Have



Businesses that offer repairs as a service to their customers often have difficulty properly tracking the parts and labors attached to each repair ticket. This can become a big area for money loss. Paper tickets can easily be lost, are hard to read, and will decrease efficiency.

While retailers vary in the amount they charge for repairs, there is one thing they all share. None of them want to lose money on a service that is supposed to bring in revenue. **As an example, a retailer who charges \$50 per hour of labor will lose \$2,600 per year if one repair technician fails to properly bill one hour of labor per week.** This amount increases as additional hours fall through the cracks. Add in the money lost due to parts that are never accounted for and you start losing thousands of dollars *every year* that you should be keeping.


$$\begin{array}{l} \$50 \times 1 \text{ hour} = \$2,600 \\ \text{per hour} \quad \text{of unbilled} \\ \text{of labor} \quad \text{labor per week} \end{array}$$

LOST PER YEAR

Before getting bogged down, remember, there is a solution. An effective repair tracker that allows repair technicians to easily and accurately add parts and labor to a ticket, will stop this revenue loss. The most effective POS will include a repair tracker.

This repair tracker must be efficient. A system that is hard for repair technicians to use will only increase frustration and lead to wasted time. An efficient one will save money, time, and frustration.

In addition to losing money on poorly billed parts and labor, lack of an effective repair tracking system also leads to dissatisfied customers, who will not recommend your shop as a repair stop.

If customers have to wait too long for repairs, or have to answer the same question about their repair job multiple times, or come upon unexpected repair costs, they aren't going to be happy and they aren't going to recommend you.

Poor repair tracking leads to fewer customers, and lower revenue. On the flip-side, a well-oiled repair system will create happy customers, who will happily tell their friends to visit your shop for repairs. A customer who is kept in the loop about the status of their repair and feels that there is an open line of communication regarding any unforeseen repair expenses will be a much happier customer who is more likely to return and recommend your services. Customers can be kept apprised of their repair's status via text message or email with a POS system that has a repair tracker with email and text capability.

## CHEAT SHEET

How does an effective repair tracking system create happy customers?

1. It notifies them that their repair is complete via text message or email.
2. It gives them a transparent view of what they're paying for with an itemized bill.
3. It gives them confidence that you are organized and efficient. That you will keep track of their item and bill them for the appropriate parts and labor.
4. Seeing you use an efficient repair tracking system will give them confidence that you will also be efficient in doing the actual repair. Saving them money in labor costs.

Not all POS systems come equipped with repair tracking capabilities. While you could use separate software to track your repairs, you will lose out on efficiency by having to deal with two systems. Employees will need to be trained on two different systems. You will then also need to contact two separate companies if you need assistance troubleshooting possible challenges. You'll also have to pay two separate bills. The extra minutes will add up and cost you. The best solution is to find a POS that manages inventory *and* tracks repairs and does it well.

# CHEAT SHEET

## 12 Functions a Repair Tracker Should Have:

1. Enter a customer's contact info
2. Assign a specific technician
3. Enter details for item to be repaired (make, model, serial etc.)
4. Choose a target date
5. Create private staff notes
6. Create customer notes
7. Choose the type of repair needed
8. Enter estimated cost for parts & labor
9. Print barcode labels to attach to the items being repaired
10. Pull items from inventory to add to the repair job
11. Text the customer updates or questions regarding any additional parts or work needed. (These texts should be automatically logged)
12. View all service tickets with their status and due date in one place

## Chapter 6

Increase Class Revenue  
Through Integrated Class  
Management & Easy Class  
Sign-Up

### Cheat Sheet

5 Capabilities  
Class  
Management  
Software Should  
Have

Classes are an excellent way to bring customers into the store and set your shop as an expert in your industry.

Many retailers know the value of classes, but also become frustrated at having to manage them. Those who use the trusty old pen and paper to manage their classes feel their time slipping away as they spend hours trying to manage multiple teachers, dozens of classes and hundreds of students.

The more popular classes become, the more difficult they are to manage. **Increase in class popularity should increase revenue without increasing time to manage those classes, ultimately cutting into the revenue those same classes bring in.** Unfortunately, many of these retailers also lose revenue as a result of no-shows.

To put an end to this unnecessary time and revenue loss, you need a system that efficiently tracks all classes with their many sessions, multiple teachers, different costs, and hundreds of students. Just as using an additional system to manage repairs decreases efficiency, so does using an additional system to manage classes. To be most efficient, you need a POS that also manages classes. This POS should have a quick, intuitive process for registering students and tracking all aspects of your classes.

Retailers who use a POS with class management capabilities can also put an end to revenue loss due to no-shows.

With class management software, they're able to require and accept payment in advance, so even if people don't attend the classes they registered for, the preparation costs are still covered.



44%

Of class bookings  
are done online

If you find a POS with email or texting capabilities, you can choose to send automated reminders to customers to notify them of upcoming classes they've registered for.

According to POS Portal, 44% of class bookings are done online. By allowing customers to purchase classes online, retailers save customers from needing to wait in line to register for classes. For those who do sign up the store, the process is faster, so the lines are shorter.

The long, slow lines caused by manual class registration make customers impatient and ultimately hurt business. By allowing customers to register online, time is saved and frustration avoided. Class schedules are easily accessed in real-time, so customers can conveniently register when it works best for them.

## CHEAT SHEET

### Capabilities Class Management Software Should Have:

1. Ability for retailer to choose on the back end to repeat classes in a series so each class doesn't have to be entered separately
2. Ability for staff to see # open seats
3. Class report that shows signed up students with contact info
4. Ability to charge students prior to class time.
5. Ability for customers to register for and purchase classes online



# Chapter 7

A Streamlined POS  
Manages Rentals Smoothly

## Cheat Sheet

9 Functions  
Rental  
Management  
Software  
Should Have

Because shoppers now begin shopping or researching online, but still want rich experiences, retailers need to find a way to meet both of these needs. Retailers can successfully meet these needs by having a website that allows online shoppers to view not only products, but items available for rent. A point of sale with rental management capabilities can make this happen.

Imagine what a great service you would provide for a customer wanting to take guitar lessons. Say she finds your website via a mobile search for nearby music stores. She could start perusing your website to get an idea of what you have to offer. Then, she could come into the shop to get some guidance from you and your staff on choosing the best instrument for her. She could purchase or rent it then, or go home and think it over and purchase or rent it from your website. She could also have the choice of signing up for a class right in the store, or from home. With online rental options, you allow customers to shop and sign up for rentals where they find it most convenient, be that online, or in store. By being available online, and in the store, you are not only fulfilling the customer's need for your products, but also the customer's need to purchase your products via multiple channels.

A better rental system benefits not only your customers, but also the members of your staff who operate the system. With an efficient, cloud-based POS, your staff will be able to serve customers wanting rentals right from the POS. Eliminating need to open another system, which cuts down on wait time and line length.

You need a system that allows you to customize rentals in a way that makes sense for your business. You should be able to offer group rentals, customize rental periods, determine late fee and deposit amounts, and create rental packages.

In addition to needing a rental system that makes customers and staff members happy, you also need one that gives you an accurate picture of where your rentals stand. How many of each rental item do you have available? When will rentals be returned? You could track all of this on a large desk calendar, or you could track it in the same system that efficiently tracks your inventory, classes, and repairs. Save time and money by keeping everything in one system.

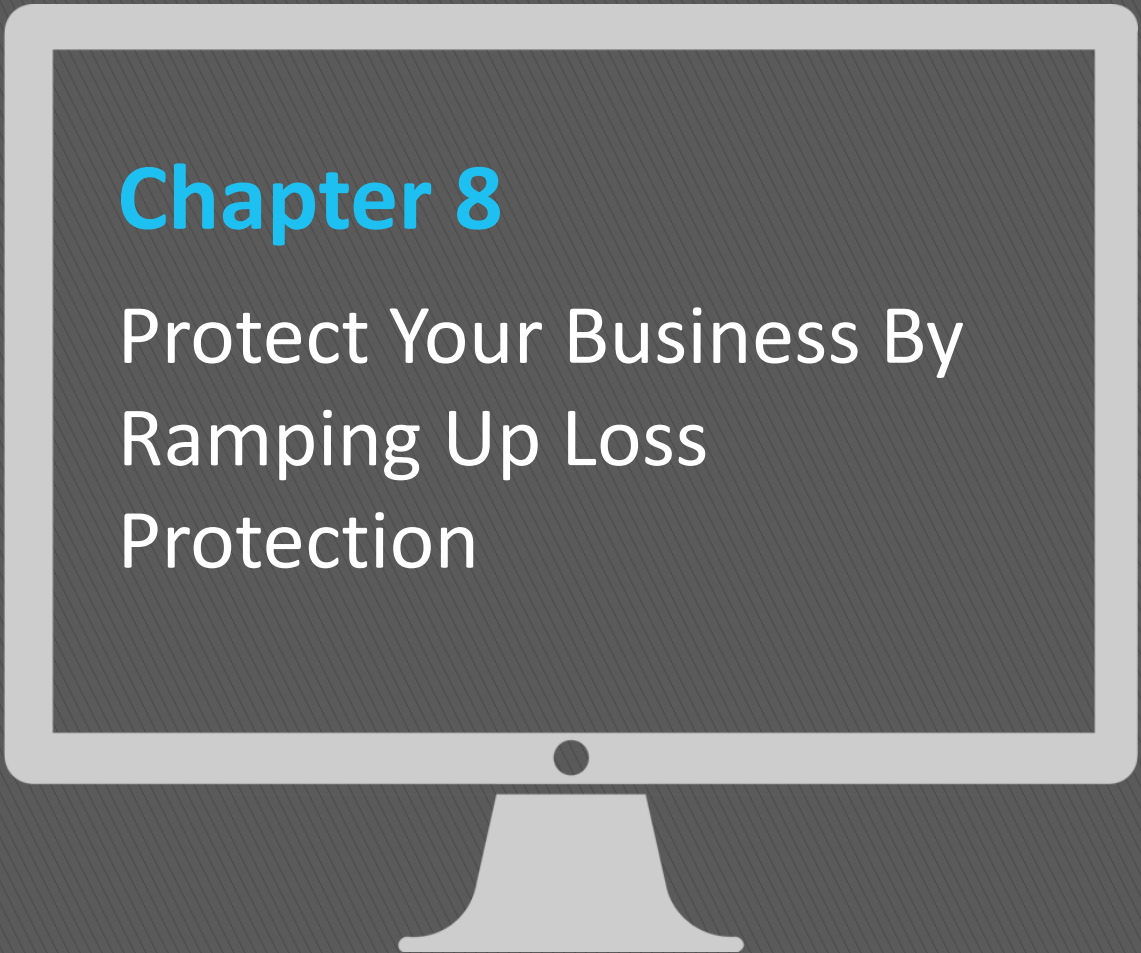
## CHEAT SHEET

### 9 Functions Rental Management Software Should Have:

1. Option for customers to sign up for rentals online.
2. Option for group rentals
3. Ability to create rental packages
4. Ability to customize deposit amounts
5. Ability to determine late fees
6. Ability to set variable rental periods
7. Calendar that shows available items each day
8. Reports that show how many rentals are out each day, when they are returning and which are overdue.
9. Option to easily print a waiver/agreement form.

## Chapter 8

Protect Your Business By  
Ramping Up Loss  
Protection



While it isn't something you want to think about, employee theft is something you do need to prepare for and protect your business against.

Since the people you hire to staff and manage your store are trained in company processes, they can use that knowledge to skim off your profits and cover up their theft.

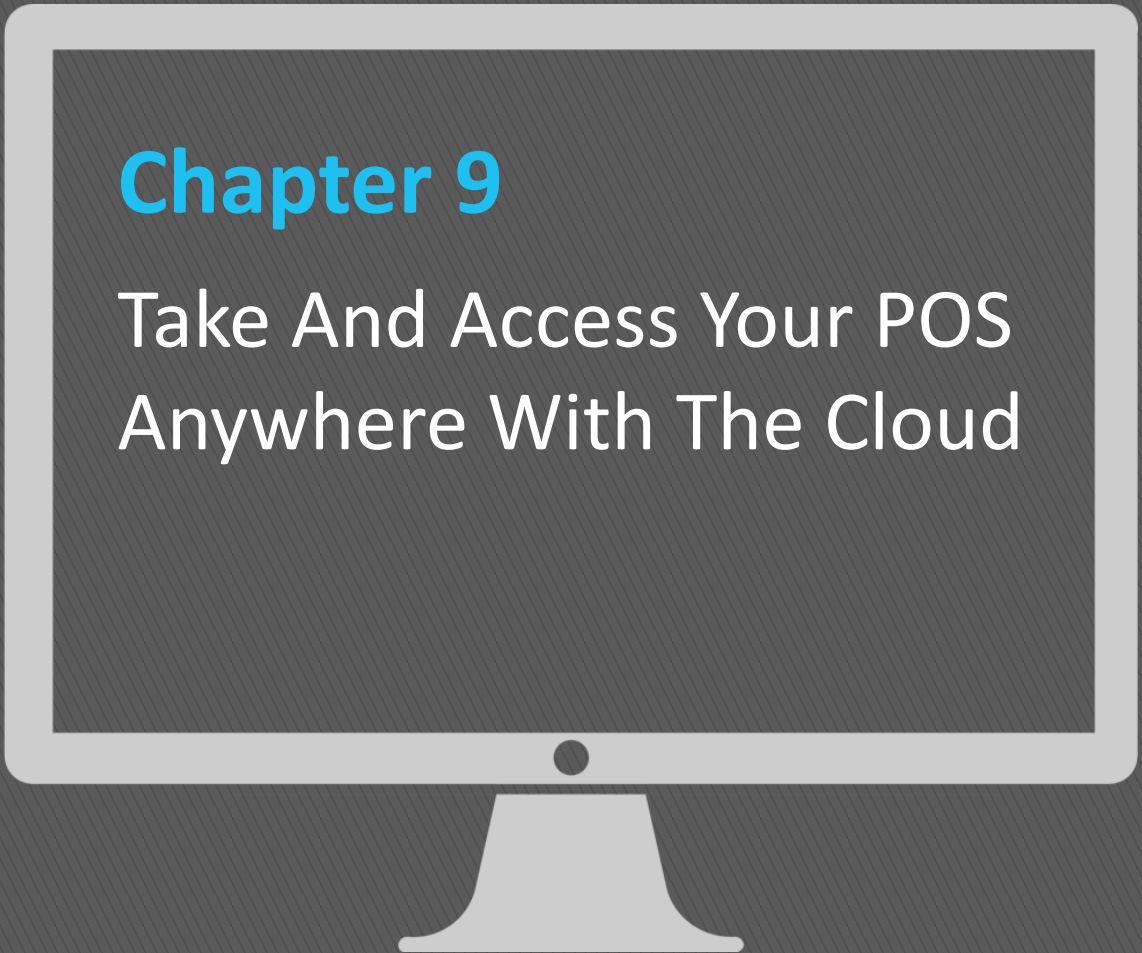
The right point-of-sale system will help you manage your employees, enforce store policies, and make sure your money stays where it belongs. Additionally, you'll be able to keep track of each product, from purchase to sale, so you can evaluate where losses are occurring and identify weak processes that require improvement.

Another way to guard against in-store theft, is to set up designated user and group settings to determine how your team members will be able use your POS system. Search for a POS system that lets you create unique user groups with special permissions to areas of the system they are authorized to access and edit. This way, YOU control the level of security your employees can or cannot have.

When you invest in a reliable point of sale system, you'll be better equipped to reduce in-store losses that might otherwise be hard to track using manual methods.

## Chapter 9

Take And Access Your POS  
Anywhere With The Cloud



What does it mean to have cloud-based software? It means you can access your inventory from anywhere.

Having a cloud-based point of sale that can be accessed online via a mobile device is a huge benefit. Instead of working with outdated, bulky hardware that stays in the store, store owners can access the POS on a tablet from home, or take their POS with them to different areas of the store if needed. Most importantly, a mobile POS can go on the road to trade shows or events.

While convenience is always a plus, the real pull for a mobile-POS is the increase in sales opportunities it brings. When you can bring your POS wherever you go, you are always available to help a customer finalize a sale. There's no need to bring bulky hardware to an event, or tell customers that they can purchase online what interests them once they get home (and forget). With a mobile POS, customers can easily make purchases right at the event.

Additionally, if you are the customer at a trade show, you can check on what products you already have in stock when considering adding new items to your inventory.

Because you can access a cloud-based POS from anywhere, you can also access your reports from anywhere. The data you need to know is always available.

“As one of the most efficient methods of managing all aspects of business, integrated cloud software is cost effective, accessible and delivers real-time, measurable solutions to everyday problems.”

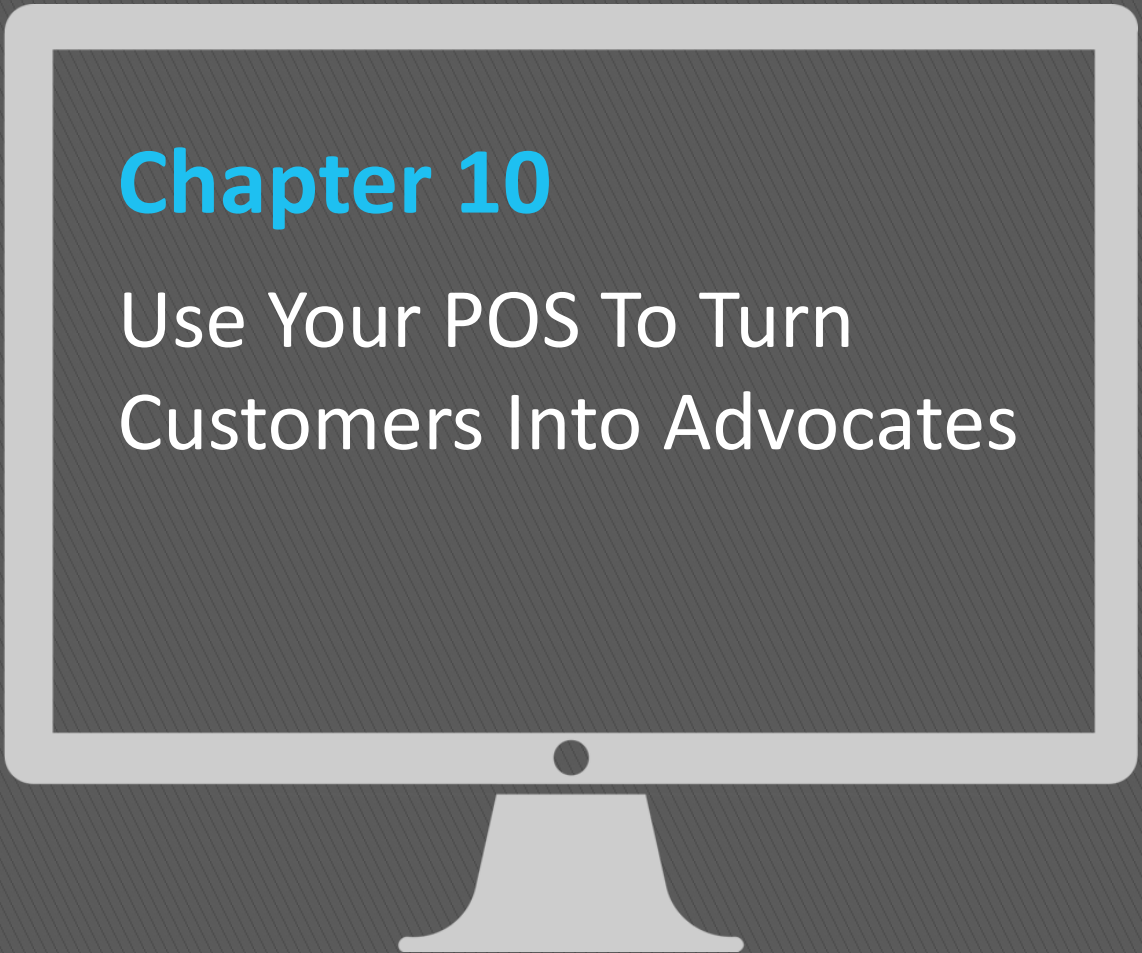
- Business 2 Community



Cloud-based software also eliminates the need to wait for or pay for updates. Updates to a cloud-based POS happen automatically so retailers can benefit from software enhancements as soon as they happen. This means retailers are always improving their efficiency with software that stays up to date.

# Chapter 10

Use Your POS To Turn  
Customers Into Advocates



The competition in the retail world increases daily. Fortunately, today's retailer can beat out the competition by providing a superior customer experience. It isn't just a nice theory. Research shows that customers are willing to pay more for a better customer experience.

"After controlling for other factors that drive repeat purchases in the transaction-based business (for example, how often the customer needs the type of goods and services that the company sells), customers who had the best past experiences spend 140% more compared to those who had the poorest past experience."

- Harvard Business Review

According to a study done by Walker, by the year 2020, customer experience will overtake price and product as the key brand differentiator.

What defines this better customer experience that customers are willing to pay more for? According to Walker, you need to cater to your customers.

"The customer of 2020 will be more informed and in charge of the experience they receive. They will expect companies to know their individual needs and personalize the experience."

- Walker

Additionally, Duct Tape Marketing states the key to providing a top-of-the-line customer experience,

"Creating an exceptional customer experience is pretty simple really...you only need to do one thing...pay attention to how your business comes into contact with customers and make every touch point, with every department, thoughtful and downright enjoyable."

- Duct Tape Marketing

What are these touch points? And how can you use your POS to improve the experiences your customers have?

- **Give Customers Shopping Options** - By using a POS that accurately tracks inventory online and in store, you are giving customers the option of shopping online or in store, or both.
- **Shorten Lines and Wait Times in the Store** - Shorten customer wait time with better systems in place. By using a POS that manages not only inventory, but also classes, rentals, and repairs, you will shorten the time it takes to move customers through the checkout.

“Americans spend roughly 37 billion hours each year waiting in line. The dominant cost of waiting is an emotional one: stress, boredom, that nagging sensation that one’s life is slipping away. The last thing we want to do with our dwindling leisure time is squander it in stasis.” (NYT)

- **Provide a Better Online Shopping Experience** - By using a POS that keeps online inventory up-to-date in real time, you will give customers confidence that they can place orders online without receiving notifications that those items were actually out-of-stock.
- **Bring Easy Shopping To Trade Shows** – With a cloud-based POS, you can bring your POS with you so customers can easily purchase your products at a trade show or elsewhere away from your store.
- **Keep In Contact With Customers** – By using a POS with texting and emailing capabilities, you can update them on repair pickups, remind them of upcoming classes, and make sure they’re aware of sales and new products.

- **Create Happier Employees** – With the right POS, your staff will be more cheerful towards customers because they will be using a frustration-free, fast, system and customers will be able to tell.

Companies with happy employees outperform the competition by 20% & happy employees are 12% more productive.

- **Customer Rewards** - Shoppers love a customer rewards or loyalty program. Find a POS that provides this functionality. It will encourage customers to shop with your store over and over again.

By using your POS to do these things, you will create happier customers, who will tell their friends. According to a survey done by American Express, on average, **happy customers tell 9 people about their experiences with a company. Unhappy customers tell 16 people about their poor experience.**

And how do those who are told about these experiences respond? 88% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations according to Search Engine Land.

After providing customers with an excellent experience, make it easy for them to spread the news. Find a POS that comes equipped with social marketing tools. You should be able to text happy customers right from your POS encouraging them to leave reviews on sites such as Yelp, Facebook, and Google Reviews.

Encourage online customers to share their love for your products and services with social sharing buttons on your website. Make it easy for customers to pin one of your products to Pinterest, or share it with friends on Facebook.

With the right POS, you can not only improve the customer experience you offer, but also turn those happy customers into advocates tell others about your great customer service via review and social sharing sites.

## Conclusion

Investing in cloud-based POS system is something you want to plan on doing ASAP. If you already have, great. Go through our cheat sheets and verify that your POS has all of the functionality and capability you need to best manage your business to be successful.

“According to Intuit market research, by using an affordable, integrated POS system, an independent retailer with revenue of \$300,000 can cut costs by close to 10 percent, saving an average \$30,000 a year. That's a substantial return on a \$1,500 investment. The question then becomes, How can you not afford a POS system?”

- Entrepreneur.com

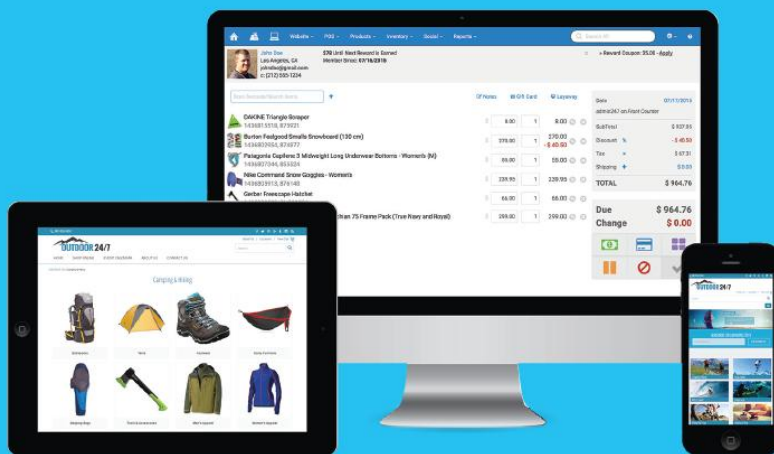
To save time, reduce costs, and increase revenue, you need a POS that:

- Is cloud-based
- Efficiently manages inventory
- Integrates with your online store
- Runs powerful reports
- Tracks repairs & services
- Manages classes
- Manages rentals
- Sends texts and emails to customers
- Offers customer rewards

# rain

## Retail Software

All-in-One Cloud-Based System  
Point of Sale | Website | Rentals



- Inventory Management
- Class Management
- Rental Management
- Integration w/ Website
- Repair and Service Tracking
- Integration with Online Store
- Social Marketing
- Text & Email Marketing

Call to Schedule a Free 15 Min Demo

[www.rainpos.com](http://www.rainpos.com)  
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## Contributors

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